



## **Proposed online MSc Social Justice and Community Action Market assessment, January 2014**

### **Demand from Students**

A revised demand survey has been live since 1 October 2013. All survey results are to 21 January 2014.

There have been 52 respondents in just under 4 months

### **LEVEL OF DEMAND**

- 47 were very interested in one of the offerings
  - 30 were very interested and found it organically, 7.5 a month. (compared with an average of 6 per month across all of our demand surveys)

### **TYPE OF DEGREE**

- Most respondents (78%) were interested in an MSc
  - Only a third were very interested in PG dip or Cert, and a quarter in CPD

### **METHOD OF LEARNING**

- 80% wanted to study part time, online

### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

- From a diverse range of sectors and ages
- 45% Scottish, 15% English, 40% other

### **COURSES**

- 9/10 were interested in:
  - Theories and Politics of Social Justice
  - Policy Analysis for Social Justice
- 7/10 were interested in
  - Learning for Democracy: Critical perspectives on Education and Citizenship
  - Critical community practices for social justice
- 6/10 were interested in:
  - Practical work based project of 15k words
- 5/10 were interested in:
  - Research methods
  - Applied Educational Methods
  - Organisational management for social justice

### **Competitive position**

A review of programmes in Education, Community and Social Justice was undertaken in 2012. No fully online programmes were found, only two programmes offered a partial online element to them, and these were both related to Social Justice and Social Responsibility and based in the United States.

Two of the programmes were entitled Social Justice (Queen Margaret, Edinburgh and Marygrove College, Michigan). Others were variations on Social Justice such as:

- Social Justice and Human Rights
- Social Justice and Equity studies
- Social Justice and Education
- Social Justice and Public Policy
- Global Development and Social Justice



Of the other programmes considered, many offered a distinct angle to the subject such as religious affiliation, human rights, gender and sexuality, or activism.

Year 1 student numbers in 2011/12 for some of the UK programmes were available from HESA:

York	Leeds	Queen Margaret	Institute of Ed	Bath
Econ. & Social Policy Analysis	Activism and Social Change	Social Justice	Social Just. & Educ.	Wellbeing & Human Dev.
11	14	3	17	6

### **Fees**

The competitor review included primarily on-campus programmes which limits the relevance of this analysis but Home fees at UK Universities varied from £3,500 to £6,300. International fees at UK Universities vary from £10,420 to £13,250. In comparison, the North American institutions charged from \$17,358 USD to \$37,000 USD.

This indicates that the proposed fees at UoE are likely to be competitive for International students but not Home students. This may threaten recruitment as UK students currently make up 45% of UoE online students and the target market are more likely to be employed in the (financially-challenged) public sector than for other programmes. These factors should be considered when forecasting student numbers.

### **Conclusions**

The demand survey shows average activity for a new programme and the competitor review found few if any direct competitors. The assumption therefore is that the proposed programme operates in a niche area. The demand survey shows that those interested in the degree are widespread geographically and in demographics, and as such targeted marketing may be difficult. In addition, as there seem to be few competitors, the website may also profit from explaining to potential students what the benefits are to them personally – what roles they will be more qualified to do with, for instance, corroborating evidence from employers.

### **Recommendations**

1. Competitor analysis – given the competitor analysis was conducted in 2012, this could be updated to get a clearer understanding of the programme's present position in the marketplace.
2. Budget – a budget of at least £5000 for year 1 and again for year 2 would be required to ensure success of this programme.
3. Timescales – it would be strongly advisable to have a decent lead-in time for the promotion of this programme. Ideally, programmes should be validated at least a full year in advance of start date. If aiming for January 2015 start, this timescale has already been missed – as such, the programme would need to be validated ASAP to ensure sufficient time for marketing, and certainly by no later than 1 April.